

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1-5 (cancelled)

6. (original) An impact absorbing type steering column apparatus provided with a collision energy absorbing device which absorbs energy of a secondary collision of an occupant upon a collision of a vehicle, said apparatus comprising:

an energy absorption quantity adjusting device which changes a secondary collision energy absorption quantity of said collision energy absorbing device;

at least one sensor which detects a condition of the occupant or the vehicle;

an electric control device which controls a drive of said energy absorption quantity adjusting device based on a result of detection by said sensor;

a steering column rotatably supporting said steering shaft; and

a bracket fixed to a vehicle body, said bracket supporting said steering column and allowing said steering column to be released therefrom in response to an impact load equal to or larger than a predetermined value,

wherein said collision energy absorbing device is provided between said steering column and said bracket, and causes fracture, or bending deformation and fracture, of an energy absorbing member composed of a metal plate with a shift of said steering column.

Claims 7-10 (cancelled)

11. (original) An impact absorbing type steering column apparatus comprising:

a steering column rotatably supporting said steering shaft;

a bracket fixed to a vehicle body, said bracket supporting said steering column and allowing said steering column to be released therefrom in response to an impact load equal to or larger than a predetermined value; and

a collision energy absorbing device provided between said steering column and said bracket, said collision energy absorbing device absorbing energy of a secondary collision of an occupant by causing fracture, or bending deformation and fracture, of an energy absorbing member composed of a metal plate with a shift of said steering column,

wherein said steering column apparatus is provided with an energy absorption quantity adjusting device which changes an absorption quantity of the collision energy.

Claim 12 (cancelled)

13. (currently amended) An impact absorbing type steering column apparatus according to ~~any one of claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 11,~~ Claim 6, wherein an electric motor is a driving source of said energy absorption quantity adjusting device.

14. (currently amended) An impact absorbing type steering column apparatus according to claim 6, ~~provided with a collision energy absorbing device which absorbs~~

~~energy of a secondary collision of an occupant upon a collision of a vehicle, said apparatus comprising:~~

~~an energy absorption quantity adjusting device which changes a secondary collision energy absorption quantity of said collision energy absorbing device;~~

~~at least one sensor which detects a condition of the occupant or the vehicle; and~~

~~an electric control device which controls a drive of said energy absorption quantity adjusting device based on a result of detection by said sensor;~~

wherein said energy absorption quantity adjusting device changes an absorption quantity of the secondary collision energy by said energy absorbing device in at least three stages.

Claims 15-25 (cancelled)

26. (previously presented) An impact absorbing steering column apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said sensor is any one of a seat position sensor, a weight sensor, a speed sensor, an occupant position sensor and a seat belt wearing sensor.

Claims 27-31 (cancelled)

32. (currently amended) An impact absorbing type steering column apparatus according to claim 6, wherein an electromagnetic actuator is a driving source of said energy absorption quantity adjusting ~~means~~device.

33. (new) An impact absorbing type steering column apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein an electric motor is a driving source of said energy absorption quantity adjusting device.

34. (new) An impact absorbing type steering column apparatus according to Claim 11,

wherein said energy absorption quantity adjusting device changes an absorption quantity of the secondary collision energy by said energy absorbing device in at least three stages.